

Message Text

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DEPARTMENT PASS LABOR

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, UK
SUBJECT: APPEALS BY FIREMEN AND MINERS REJECTED
SUMMARY - THE TUC GENERAL COUNCIL REJECTED THE FIRE
BRIGADES UNION'S (FBU) APPEAL OF THE EARLIER TUC DE-
CISION NOT TO SUPPORT THE STIKING FIREMEN, WHILE THE
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HIGH COURT TURNED DOWN AN APPEAL OF A LOWER COURT DE-
CISION NOT TO ISSUE AN INJUNCTION WHICH WOULD BLOCK
IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL PRODUCTIVITY SCHEMES NEGO-
TIATED BY THE MINERSUNION AND THE NATIONAL COAL BOARD
(NCB). WHILE THE FIREMEN'S STRIKE IS EXPECTED TO
CONTINUE INTO THE NEW YEAR, ITS ULTIMATE COLLAPSE
SEEMS INEVITABLE. THE COURT'S DECISION CLEARS THE

WAY FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SEVERAL PRODUCTIVITY DEALS THAT HAVE ALREADY BEEN STRUCK AND FOR THE NEGOTIATION OF OTHERS. IT WAS A CLEAR VICTORY.FOR MINERS LEADER GORMLEY AND HIS MODERATE ALLIES. END SUMMARY.

1. THE TUC GENERAL COUNCIL MET DECEMBER 21 TO CONSIDER THE FBU'S APPEAL OF AN EARLIER DECISION BY THE TUC'S FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE NOT TO SUPPORT THE STRIKING FIREMEN. AFTER HAVING HAD TO PASS THROUGH LINES OF ANGRY FIREMEN AND THEIR SUPPORTERS OUTSIDE CONGRESS HOUSE, GENERAL COUNCIL MEMBERS VOTED 20 TO 17 TO SUSTAIN THE EARLIER DECISION. THE VOTE, ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, WAS ALONG PREDICTABLE LEFT/RIGHT LINES, WITH KEN GILL (AUEW/TASS), RAY BUCKTON (ASLEF) AND CLIVE JENKINS (ASTMS) IN THE FOREFRONT OF THOSE WHO VOTED TO BACK THE STRIKERS.

2. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THERE SEEMS TO BE LITTLE CHANCE THAT THE FIREMEN WILL RETURN TO WORK BEFORE THE NEW YEAR, THE COLLAPSE OF THEIR STRIKE NOW SEEMS VIRTUALLY INEVITABLE. THE HOPES FOR A SETTLEMENT IN EXCESS OF 10 PERCENT ALSO RECEIVED A SETBACK WHEN LOCAL MANUAL WORKERS ACCEPTED A GOVERNMENT OFFER OF 10 PERCENT. END COMMENT.

3. TRADE UNION MODERATES WON ANOTHER VICTORY DECEMBER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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21 WHEN THE HIGH COURT REJECTED AN APPEAL OF AN EARLIER COURT DECISION NOT TO BLOCK IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL PRODUCTIVITY BONUS SCHEMES FOR MINERS. YORKSHIRE MINERS LEADER ARTHUR SCARGILL HAD SOUGHT TO INJOIN HIS UNION FROM ACCEPTING LOCAL INCENTIVE PLANS ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE MINERS HAD EARLIER VOTED TO REJECT AN INDUSTRY-WIDE PRODUCTIVITY BONUS PLAN. THE COURT'S DECISION APPEARS TO CLEAR THE WAY FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PRODUCTIVITY SCHEMES THAT HAVE ALREADY BEEN NEGOTIATED IN 12 OF THE NCB'S 24 REGIONS, WITH MORE TO FOLLOW.

4. COMMENT: THE COURT'S DECISION VINDICATED THE NATIONAL UNION OF MINERS (NUM) DECISION TO ALLOW LOCAL SCHEMES AND WAS A VICTORY FOR MINERS LEADER JOE GORMLEY AND HIS MODERATE COLLEAGUES. ALTHOUGH SCARGILL AND HIS SUPPORTERS IN THE UNION VOWED TO CONTINUE THEIR OPPOSITION TO SUCH ARRANGEMENTS, THEIR SCOPE FOR ACTION SEEMS LIMITED. AT THIS POINT, THE WAY SEEMS TO BE OPENING UP FOR A FUTURE SPREAD OF PRODUCTIVITY INCENTIVE SCHEMES AND THAT WOULD BE AN IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT FOR THE FUTURE

OF BRITAIN'S MINING INDUSTRY.

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